

Emergency cash injection needed for higher education during 2020, says IFUT

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The Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT) has called for allocation of an emergency cash injection for higher education during 2020 to address the escalating crisis in resources. "It must be a priority for any incoming government," IFUT General Secretary, Joan Donegan said.

In 2016 the specially commissioned Cassells Report on future funding of higher education warned that €600m additional funding was needed between then and 2021 to address the under-resourcing crisis. It said that a further €1b would be required in the decade to 2030 to maintain higher education standards.

Joan Donegan said that almost four years after the Cassells Report, government funding continues to deteriorate.

"This shortfall in funding has impacted the student : teacher ratio to such a degree that current levels of over 20:1 put Ireland at the fourth highest ratio across the OECD. These ratios need to be immediately addressed before the current crises becomes irreversible."

"The educational fabric of higher education is in danger of collapse if this situation is not urgently resolved."

"The next government must provide an immediate cash injection to higher education during 2020."

"The Cassells Report warned that "Countries with whom we seek to compare ourselves have pinpointed investment in higher education as the catalyst for economic and social development."

"Student numbers are projected to continue to soar over the next five years. Our universities are already sliding in international rankings."

"In the absence of immediate government action, it will soon simply not be possible for higher education institutions to continue to deliver the quality education and graduates necessary to maintain our economy and society," Joan Donegan said.

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For further information on this media release please contact:

John Gallagher - John Gallagher Consulting - Tel. 087 9369888

Joan Donegan - General Secretary, IFUT - Tel. 087 1315960